

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for sorting a plurality of checks comprising:

reading information from a check of the plurality of checks, the check being drawn against an account maintained by a customer at a financial institution;

obtaining a sort priority order number for the check from a database using at least a portion of the information read from the check, obtaining a sort priority order number for the check from a database, the sort priority order number being based on a delivery location specified by the customer for an account statement associated with the account;

sorting the check based on the sort order-priority order number obtained from the database; and

repeating the reading, obtaining and sorting steps for each of the plurality of checks.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein reading information from the check further comprises:

reading a routing number associated with the financial institution from the check.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein reading information from the check further comprises:

reading an account number of the account upon which the check is drawn from the check.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein reading information from the check further comprises:

reading a check number from the check.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the sort ~~order-priority~~ order number is further based on a type of account associated with the check.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the sort ~~order-priority~~ order number is further based on processing ~~foref~~ of the check specified by the customer.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 7, wherein processing ~~foref~~ of the check includes whether or not the check will be included with thea account statement associated with the accountcheck.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the sort ~~order-priority~~ order number is further based on an amount of the check.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the sort ~~order-priority~~ order number is further based on a payee of the check.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein reading information from the check further comprises:

placing the plurality of checks in a feeder;

separating the check from the plurality of checks; and

scanning the check to read the information.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein sorting the check further comprises:

placing the check in an appropriate bin based on the sort ~~order-priority~~ order number.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein obtaining a sort priority order number for the check further comprises:

using at least a portion of the information read from the check as a pointer to obtain the sort priority order number for the check from the database.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of checks include separators.

15. (Currently Amended) A system for sorting a plurality of checks, each of the checks being drawn against an account maintained by a respective customer at a financial institution, the system comprising:

a scanner module to read information from a check;

a controller coupled to the scanner, the controller receiving the information read from the check by the scanner;

a database coupled to the controller, the database storing sort priority order numbers for the plurality of checks, the sort priority order number for each check being based on a delivery location specified by the respective customer for an account statement associated with the account maintained by the respective customer, the controller obtaining the sort priority order number for the check from the database using at least a portion of the information read from the check; and

a sorter coupled to the controller, the sorter receiving the check from the scanner and placing the check into one of a plurality of bins based on the sort order-priority order number obtained from the database.

16. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the controller is integral with the sorter.

17. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15, wherein the information read from the check includes a routing number associated with the financial institution where the account is maintained by the customer.

18. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15, wherein the information read from the check includes an account number of the account upon which the check is drawn.

19. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the information read from the check includes a check number.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15, wherein the sort ~~order-priority order~~ number is further based on a type of account associated with the check.

22. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15, wherein the sort ~~order-priority order~~ number is further based on processing ~~fore~~ of the check specified by the customer.

23. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 22, wherein processing ~~fore~~ of the check includes whether or not the check will be included with ~~the accounts~~ statement associated with the accountcheck.

24. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15, wherein the sort ~~order-priority order~~ number is further based on an amount of the check.

25. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15, wherein the sort ~~order-priority order~~ number is further based on a payee of the check.

26. (Original) The system of claim 15, further comprising:

a feeder module coupled to the scanner module, the feeder module receiving the plurality of checks and feeding the plurality of checks seriatim to the scanner module.

27. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the scanner module is a magnetic ink character recognition scanner.

28. (Original) The system of claim 15, wherein the scanner module is an optical character recognition scanner.